

From: Eugene Vilensky
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/13/02 12:48am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Hello,

As a college student and a computer enthusiast and future programmer, it is my strong belief that Microsoft has done irreparable harm to the computer industry. They have done wrong and deserve to be punished not because they are a successful company, but because they have violated anticompetitive law, and have done it with an air of arrogance and political clout and disrespect for the wishes of consumers.

It is understood that Microsoft is the U.S.' single most successful company, but they have not done it by pushing out a quality product that has fought for its own Darwinian place in the marketplace. They did it by choking off competition - in the case of preventing computers from shipping with BeOS installed alongside Windows (or any dual-boot configuration). I was and still am a big fan of the Be Operating System, it was a powerful tool that would in a free market have won marketshare on its own merit, but it suffered because people could not find computers with BeOS installed, hence the main tenet of competition - consumer choice - was choked off by Microsoft.

Even now I cannot go to BestBuy or circuit city or Dell.com and easily order a preconfigured Linux machine. Even now Microsoft is plotting the destruction of consumer choice.

And if we don't punish Microsoft for breaking the law, why can they not be brought to justice for delivering inferior products? If GM didn't have Ford to contend with, would you, the "Department of Justice" allow such a GM to ship cars with faulty clutches and breaks, that would harm people's livelihoods as much as Microsoft bugs have stolen money from my employer and my fathers employer and the company that my uncle owns? The damage is in the thousands of dollars, because Microsoft can defecate in a box, brand it as 'Windows', and the market is forced to accept it. We demand some semblance of quality from our auto manufacturers, so why not from our software suppliers?

I hope that the DoJ really lives up to its name, promotes competition and products that succeed on their merits and creates an economy in which two or even three or four 'Microsofts' can coexist, improving each generation of software upon that which came before, learning that customers are important when there is an alternative, and each employing thousands of people and strengthening the economy.

--

Best regards,
Eugene

<mailto:e.vilensky@home.com>